

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The present Amendment is being submitted simultaneously with the filing of the present application.

Applicant notes that in the last Office Action in the parent application, claims 8 and 11 (now claims 8 and 9) were rejected as being anticipated by German reference 2952510.

Claim 10 (now claim 9) was rejected as being unpatentable over WO99/16659 in view of the patent to Stevens et al.

At the outset, Applicant submits that all of the features recited in the claims are shown in the drawings presently on file.

Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the claims presently on file and in an unobvious, highly advantageous manner from the processes and constructions disclosed in the references cited in the parent application.

Turning now to the references, and particularly to WO99/16659, it can be seen that this reference discloses a method for mounting a self-supporting vehicle roof. This reference only deals with the assembly of the roof to the body. The roof consists of an inner roof and an outer roof. In the presently claimed invention, on the other hand, the roof unit has an outer skin and an inner roof (i.e., the inwardly facing ceiling).

The patent to Stevens et al. discloses a vehicle trim panel with natural fiber layers. The Examiner combined these references in rejecting claim 10 of the parent application, which claim corresponds to claim 10 of the present application. Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of references does not teach or suggest the invention recited in the claims presently on file. Applicant respectfully submits that there is nothing in the teachings of these references which would lead one skilled in the art to select the combination argued by the Examiner. There is no teaching by the combination of references of a roof unit having an outer skin and an inwardly facing ceiling which form a separate unit that is ready for installation and connection to a base structure by joining configurations that mate with one another, as in the presently claimed invention. Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of references relied upon by the

Examiner in rejecting claim 10 in the parent application under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) does not teach these features. Applicant submits that the '659 reference does not teach a roof unit having an outer skin and an inward facing ceiling with a sandwich structure that are combined together to form a unit ready for installation with the base structure, as in the presently claimed invention.

Turning now to German reference 2952510, the Examiner cited this reference as anticipating claims 8 and 11 of the parent application, which correspond to claims 8 and 9 of the present application. Since the Examiner cited no specific portions of the German reference, Applicant could not find where this reference discloses the features recited in independent claim 8. In particular, Applicant does not see where the reference discloses introducing the roof unit, which has joining configurations and fittings premounted to the roof unit, through an opening between the longitudinal frames of the basic structure, bringing the roof unit into contact with corresponding joining configurations of the longitudinal frames by an upward movement, and permanently joining the roof unit there. Applicants do not see where a process containing these steps as disclosed in German reference 2952510. To Applicant's understanding, the German reference does not disclose a roof unit with fittings premounted thereto, nor does the reference disclose bringing the roof unit into contact with corresponding joining configurations of longitudinal frames by an upward movement of the roof unit, as in the presently claimed invention.

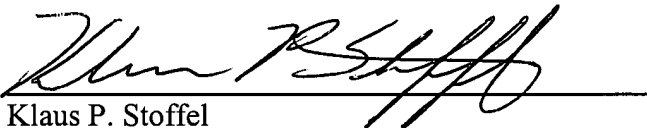
Should the Examiner maintain his rejection based upon this reference, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner provide detailed support for his rejection by referring to specific portions of the reference so that the Applicant can respond to such a rejection in more detail.

In view of these considerations, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of claims 8 and 11 in the parent application under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over the above discussed references is not applicable to claims 8 and 9 presently on file and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and allowance of the present application are respectfully requested.

In the event the actual fee is greater than the payment submitted or is inadvertently not enclosed or if any additional fee during the prosecution of this application is not paid, the Patent Office is authorized to charge the underpayment to Deposit Account No. 15-0700.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Klaus P. Stoffel', is written over a horizontal line.

Klaus P. Stoffel

Registration No.: 31,668

OSTROLENK, FABER, GERB & SOFFEN, LLP

1180 Avenue of the Americas

New York, New York 10036-8403

Telephone: (212) 382-0700

KPS:sks